

PEACE NEWS

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2d.

JACK THE GIANT-KILLER

THE chairman at Mr. Churchill's meeting in Glasgow last Friday was concerned about what was to happen after the war. "It is quite right," said Mr. Churchill at the end of his speech, "that that should enter our minds, but you will excuse me if I do not myself, with my responsibilities and duties, give it immediate place in my thoughts. My one aim," he declared amid cheers, "is to extirpate Hitlerism from Europe."

There appears to be some confusion of thought. To what phase, we would ask, does the "extirpation of Hitlerism" belong? Does it happen during the war, or after it? And this is no abstract or academic question. On the answer to it sane statesmanship depends.

Hitlerism itself emerged in an after-war period. There is no possible doubt that it is a post-war phenomenon. It would seem probable therefore, that the right time for dealing with it would be after this war, and a good way to begin the operation would be to end the war. For if it goes on very much longer, it may not be Hitlerism with which we shall have to deal.

Let us look back again. The last war was fought, and fought to the end, to extirpate Prussian militarism. Not quite so stubbornly as today, but stubbornly enough, our statesmen refused to think of the world after the war. They also excused themselves, by reason of their "responsibilities and duties", from giving it immediate place in their thoughts. Their one aim was the extirpation of Prussian militarism, and their one means "the knock-out blow." And the consequence was that Prussian militarism re-emerged after a dozen years ten times more formidable than it was before.

Like the Bourbons, our statesmen learn nothing; unlike the Bourbons they forget everything. To the thoughtful mind it is terrifying in itself that any statesman who held a position of authority in the last war should hold a position of authority in this one. From Bethmann-Hollweg and the Kaiser to Hitler we move from one world into another, from one phase of human history into another. Hitler is a terrifying phenomenon, no doubt; but part of his terrifyingness derives from the very fact that he belongs to a new world. He is the product of what is called emergent evolution. He may be a monstrous birth, but he is certainly a new one.

In order to deal with him, one would have thought a new birth in British statesmanship was required. The need is not felt. In Mr. Churchill, it seems, we have discovered our eternal principle. The Germans—being a lesser breed—may have to evolve; Britain stays put. And there is no denying that the great majority of Britons feel safe with Mr. Churchill: that he helped them through the last war is a guaran-

(Continued on back page)

WE MUST BUILD FOR THE FUTURE

I MUST confess my disappointment this week is bitter. I had not conceived it possible that the weekly contribution could sink so low as £19 1s. 10d., making the total £1,284 16s. 9d. I believed and believe, a steady £250 a week is possible; and the worst I was prepared for was an occasional drop to £40. Well, well!

But remember that we have to build for the future. If we are to have that pacifist co-operative press on which I am determined, we shall need £5,000. I was beginning to hope we should get it by the end of this year. Let us do it!

The Editor

I am a PATRIOT—so I want

Peace Talks Now—

I AM a patriot, but I want peace talks now. To many that will seem a contradiction in terms. Yet I believe I speak for many people, many of them by no means pacifists.

Last month the News Chronicle published the result of a survey by the British Institute of Public Opinion. According to this, one in every fourteen people would agree with the suggestion that we should have peace talks now.

Unpatriotic? Yes—if you believe the Voice of Authority when it declares so stridently that patriotism inevitably means a fight to a finish, that we must crush Germany completely. (I seem to remember that we tried that once before, not so long ago. . .)

But I feel it is high time someone replied to the Voice of Authority, on behalf of those pariahs, the people who want peace talks now.

★

I SAID I was a patriot. By that I mean that I want my country to have the honour of leading the world in social conditions. I want its people to have good homes, good food and plenty of it, and adequate opportunities for leading fully developed lives—not rabbed by poverty, by lack of amenities or social services.

I also want my country to live up to the ideals it proclaims—freedom, democracy, and the rest of it. I want it to take the next step along the democratic road—to end the power of money and what we vaguely call Big Business to rule our lives—even though we have a vote.

That is my patriotism. My hopes of seeing those things come to pass have received blow after blow since the war started. I am now convinced that unless we can stop this war soon the grounds for hope will almost disappear, perhaps for generations.

★

JUST consider: social conditions have grown steadily worse since the war started. What homes we have are being physically smashed. Food becomes scarcer and scarcer—and more and more expensive. The danger of disease has grown.

Worst of all, education is in a chaotic state. We are not only gambling with our lives, our property, we are staking our children's very future.

To send a slum child to live in the country is good. (Why wait for a war before you do it?) To uproot city children in their thousands, and billet them upon strangers in overcrowded country towns and villages, is not so good. To expect that their education will not suffer from the transplantation seems like criminal ignorance. But Authority doesn't seem to worry much about that; the teachers are left to struggle as best they may with inadequate equipment and accommodation, and the complete disruption of normal school life.

And what of the children, now at the most formative period of their lives? What will they come to think of this generation, which smashes the world which it held in trust for them—and then fails to equip them properly for the task of clearing up the wreckage? Does true patriotism mean we must be willing that the iniquity of the fathers shall be visited upon the children?

★

SO much for the material side. What of our ideals? I see them betrayed on every hand. Our acts belie them.

We boast of freedom within the Empire. In Rhodesia, about a year ago,

—says—

THE PLAIN MAN

copper miners on strike for more pay were shot when trouble arose. To the leaders of the Indian people, dragged into the war without being asked, we say, "Keep quiet or you go to jail." They speak out, they go to jail—men and women with long records of struggling for freedom for their own folk.

Freedom at home—when a paper such as Peace News is always liable to sudden suppression; when few printers will print it, wholesalers ban it, and many newspapers refuse advertisements for it.

So it goes on—prominent pacifists may not preach, nor speak, nor even conduct a choir for the BBC. This sort of thing hurts the sensitive patriot, most of all, for he sees his fellow-citizens unconsciously falling victims to a moral and mental poison; we call it Nazism or Fascism when we see it at work in other lands. It means that Britain is in mortal danger of complete totalitarianism—whether by military standards we win or lose. No patriot, conscious of his heritage, can think of that without despair.

It is idle, when that poison is at work, to speak fine phrases about the new and nobler Britain we shall build after the war. The poison will kill the spirit you would need to inspire you in that task.

★

HIGH and low you will find this poison doing its subtle work. It affects our whole outlook on the world.

For example, Mr. Chamberlain assured the German people, in a wireless talk a few hours after the declaration of war, that we had no quarrel with them, but only with their leaders. Since then the poison has been at work, and the result of another survey of public opinion—also published in December—showed that seven in every ten people looked upon the German people as our enemies. And Mr. Chamberlain's successor now talks of "barbarous Huns."

Again: we boast of our blockade. Yet it is designed to starve our friends in neutral Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, and France. We turn down Mr. Hoover's proposal to feed those friends under conditions that would prevent the food being seized by Germany. Yet such conditions are already assuring the receipt of food through the blockade by prisoners of war, and by some Poles. Can our other defeated Allies believe our talk of friendship with all democrats? Would you, if you were being starved?

Yet as a nation we don't see this—for the poison is at work.

★

THERE'S no alternative, you say?

You cannot say that till you've tried to find one. And if you're a patriot, and you care for all the things I've mentioned, you must try, before you gamble everything in a war to a finish.

The alternative was put forward in Parliament a few weeks ago. It was, of course, misrepresented.

The Government spokesmen completely ignored the suggestion that Britain should set an example. When it was suggested that we, for our part, should offer to give up the fruits of past aggression before asking Germany to do the same, they pretended that capitulation was being proposed.

Yet if you want to end the will to war in Germany—which at present you're trying to do by bombs and blockade—why not at least try the method of admitting that Germany is copying Britain in Empire-building, and that you recognize that Empire-building is too dangerous an occupation for humanity under modern conditions? And why not offer to play your part in ending Empire-holding?

For the life of me I cannot see why not. Such a revolutionary move would kindle men's hopes everywhere, including Germany. To try it would cost nothing, and it might give the real patriots a chance to build that better Britain now.

Then why don't we try it? Can it be that our rulers aren't as patriotic as all that, after all?

Commentary

Freedom of the Press

Edited by "Observer"

WHATEVER be our opinion of the principles and tactics of the Daily Worker, its suppression is a portent. I do not deny that the problem of free speech in a nation committed to total war is by no means so simple as many imagine. The traditional democratic principle of freedom for all opinion cannot endure under such a system; and there is a certain justice (of a superficial sort) in the suppression of that opinion which openly advocates a political system under which all freedom of opinion is suppressed.

But this is not the principle on which the Daily Worker has been suppressed. It has been suppressed on no ground of principle at all—but simply on the ground that its utterances are "calculated to impede the prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion."

Essence of Democracy

THIS criterion, I insist, is morally and politically indefensible. Because the vital question that must be freely discussed is precisely what constitutes the prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion. If we are not allowed to discuss that openly, and to point out what we believe to be the barrenness and fatality of the conceptions and measures of the Government—and the Daily Worker did that, among other things—then there is no reality in our democracy at all.

I grant that the old forms and practices of democracy must suffer some diminution under the necessities of war: that is one of the reasons why we pacifists abhor war. But it is a matter of life and death that the essence of democracy shall be preserved. This can be done only by formulating new principles of freedom for the press—principles, I repeat—and no longer leaving the decision to the capricious interpretation of an ambiguous and dangerous formula by a Minister whose utterances show that he has no awareness of the magnitude of the issue at stake.

(Continued on page 2)

A PACIFIST COMMENTARY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Strategic Gain and Loss

FROM the strategic point of view the most untoward event during the past week has been the successful attack made "with great skill and courage" (Times) by German dive-bombers operating from Sicily upon part of the British fleet in the Mediterranean; the most encouraging of the striking diminution in the losses of British merchant shipping.

The former implies a powerful challenge to our somewhat precarious command of the Mediterranean, such that the resumption of the Suez trade-route which lately seemed probable may be indefinitely postponed. That means that the heavy additional command upon our shipping while it is compelled to take the Cape route will continue. Very evidently, jubilation over the reduction of shipping losses has been discouraged by authority.

Italy's Plight

THE spectacular entry of the Germans into the Mediterranean struggle suggests that there is not much substance in the reports—published chiefly by the News Chronicle—of Italian readiness to make a separate peace. Mussolini, nevertheless, appears to be in the devil of a hole. The very thing that makes overtures for a separate peace inconceivable tends further to discredit his regime—the necessity of inviting the presence and the aid of Germans. So that the political future of Italy becomes a subject for nice speculation. The possibilities seem infinite.

Presumably, the uncomfortable predicament of Mussolini will not be without its lesson for General Franco, who also is in the devil of a hole. A writer in the well-informed American paper PM says that the sheer misery in Spain far surpasses that of any other country in Europe; which is saying a lot, these days. General Franco is sitting on a powder-barrel.

Position of France

ONE obvious outcome of the increasing embarrassments of Italy and Spain is that the relative position of France is much stronger than anyone could have imagined it would be six months ago. That is a simple deduction. Factual evidence for it is not plentiful, for the dearth of real news from France is remarkable. But such as there is indicates that Marshal Petain is not only morally strong enough to refuse to move beyond the terms of the armistice—which I never doubted—but that Herr Hitler considers it inexpedient to press for more.

Marcel Deat, who may know, declares that the Vichy Government has decided, in the event of any further tension between Germany and France, to cross the Mediterranean: which is at any rate a more rational proceeding than the once mooted evacuation of the British Government to Canada, and more embarrassing to Herr Hitler.

A New Crisis?

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL warns us that "before us lie many months of having to endure bombardment of our cities and industrial areas without the power to make equal reply"; while The Times (Jan. 16) openly speaks of "the vast numerical superiority of the enemy's air-fleets".

Since the Sicilian battle proved that the German airmen are certainly not lacking in audacity, the problem is to discover what the German air-force is up to. Assuredly, it is up to no good. Is it being trained in some new technique for air-invasion of these islands? Or of Ireland?

The latter enterprise seems the more probable, and, though I doubt whether Eire would follow Mr. Bernard Shaw's sound advice to imitate the non-resistance of the Danes, armed resistance would hardly be more rewarding. Such an air-invasion of Eire may be the crisis which Mr. Stimson told the Foreign Affairs Committee of Congress that he apprehended "within 60 or at least (? most) 90 days."

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The U.S.A. And The War

AT present the American Government appears to distinguish between "saving Britain from defeat" and helping Britain to victory. It is not a distinction that is likely to last long once the war-machosis has gripped America; but the technical difficulties in the way of sending a vast army to Europe are likely to remain very serious. Mr. Churchill makes it fairly plain that he expects one eventually. "We don't require in 1941 large armies from overseas," he said at Glasgow; and the plain implication is that we do require them in 1942 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6, or whenever the knock-out blow is timed for.

That indeed seems to be the non-martial eye the pure military logic of the matter. But for myself I have no belief in it. The Germans are, almost certainly, preparing an attack of unprecedented severity. If we survive it, things will probably move quickly—much more quickly than American armies will arrive. The increasing pressure toward some form of National Socialism will reveal the deep social cleavage in Britain; and latent influences for a peace of compromise will declare themselves. In which case, pacifists will have to choose their ground warily. But the real decision will come from the U.S.A.

An Unworthy Confusion

THERE has come my way a private criticism of "that dreadful Peace News" by a person of some eminence, whose sincerity I do not doubt. He "really and truly believes that this horror is largely due to pacifism."

That, of course, is the old confusion between those who were prepared to sacrifice themselves for peace, and those who wanted to be left in peace and were ready to sacrifice others. It is a confusion unworthy of a serious thinker to lump these utterly different views together under the one name pacifism. My critic is here incriminating the greater part of Mr. Chamberlain's National majority—not the pacifism of the Peace Pledge Union. But it is a curious thing that a serious thinker should be unaware of the confusion.

Two Standards

THE substance of his charge is, however, more interesting. It is that the writer of

these notes "says, in effect, that there is a good deal to be said for Nazism when Nazis do it, though when we make the faintest approach to Nazism we are entirely to be condemned."

Even admitting that that is a fair description of my attitude (which I do not) it is remarkable that my critic, who is a Christian, should find it intolerable. If one believes, as I do, that the vindictive treatment of the Germans after the last war by the victorious Allies was the chief cause of the rise of Nazism in Germany, there is good reason why I should not regard it as an eruption of uncaused malignancy, and why I should be intensely critical of any tendency in that direction in Britain.

I have, and use deliberately, two standard of judgment. And I avow my belief that if Britain had had to endure what Germany had to endure from 1918 to 1930, something very like Nazism would have swept this country. One who believes that Britain herself is largely to blame for the eruption of Nazism—and, strangely enough, my critic once believed that—cannot, on pain of losing his own integrity, condemn Nazism without at the same time much more severely condemning Britain.

A Matter Of Perspective

BUT, deeper than this, I am divided from my critic by an impassable gulf, created by an entire difference of perspective.

First, because I regard this war as the nemesis of a false democracy. If you fight a war—and sacrifice your best and bravest—in order "to make the world safe for democracy," and then treat German democracy as we treated it, the offence smells to heaven. I hate the methods of the avenging angel; but I expected him to come.

Secondly, I regard National Socialism—of which the essence is to employ the unemployed by unlimited preparation for war—not as something extraordinary or monstrous, but as the one practical solution of the unemployment problem of which man in his present state of selfishness and social unconsciousness is capable. That is why we are in process of adopting it ourselves.

In regarding Hitlerism as something diabolical to be extirpated by war we are therefore

furthering the advance of the disease of Hitlerism, and succumbing to it ourselves. The moral and religious fervour of the crusade against Hitlerism is merely the means by which we become the willing slaves of the evil powers which are at work to make humanity sub-human.

We cry "Erasez l'infame," and become the "infame" ourselves; because we have failed in the moral courage of Christian self-judgment. "I in my selfhood am that Satan; I am that Evil One." That I believe "to be Christianity; and my critic's Christianity, is paganism."

The German System

INCIDENTALLY, I should like to distinguish two aspects, or elements, in the German system and, so far as possible, to use National Socialism for the one, and Nazism for the other.

National Socialism is, relatively to any other extant form of large-scale society, a good thing. It is an attempt to solve the problems which capitalist democracy conceals or ignores. Nazism is the ruthless terrorism, the racial myth, the extermination (as distinct from expropriation) of the Jews, the worship of force. I do not believe these are inherent in the idea of National Socialism, though I believe it is incompatible with democratic "liberty."

In any case I do not regard National Socialism—even in its expurgated form—as an end in itself; it is not a good form of society. But I believe it is as good as anything attainable in the present condition of moral chaos. The very foundations of the modern world are rotten.

Testament of a Great Man

THOSE who would like to know what I understand by a good form of society cannot do better than read Eric Gill's Autobiography (Cape 12s. 6d.).

It is a noble book, and I tread the earth more lightly for having read it. It is packed full of life-wisdom and humanity. All that I understand by pacifism is set forth in it; and set forth (as pacifism can only be set forth) in the medium of an actual life. This is the testament of a humble and great man. Read it, brothers, read it!

SOME PRINCIPLES OF RECONSTRUCTION

I-The True and the False Greatness

By the Rev.

JOHN MURPHY

who is Professor of
Comparative Religion
in Manchester University.

IT is clear enough to all of us that there are many things which will shortly require reconstruction; and as there is not much that people who believe in reconciliation and peace can do to affect the present course of events, it seems but common sense to give some thought to ensuring that the future may express better than the present those elements of our faith.

One of the ways of doing this which suggests itself is to look at some of the words we use to describe our social relations, and, if we can, to "depolarize" them, in the phrase of the Professor at the Breakfast Table; that is, lift them out of the unfortunate sense into which they have been magnetized by their associations in the past into a meaning which is appropriate to the new time.

One word which seems to demand this treatment urgently is "greatness." A true and a false greatness are presenting themselves very evidently to the eyes of men at this moment, like the loathly head of Medusa, on the one hand, and the noble face of Athene, on the other; the one to turn mankind to stone, the other to bring the world to wisdom and peace; and it is worth while to help men to choose between them.

CONTRASTING CONCEPTIONS

No better way of doing this can be found than to look at that striking incident in the life of Jesus recorded in the fourth Gospel, in which two conceptions of greatness are seen facing each other in impressive contrast. At the very moment in which Jesus, according to the Gospel, was most conscious of his task to reshape the future of humanity he girt himself with a towel and washed his disciples' feet. It is probable that the drama of the feet-washing was directly connected with a discussion among the twelve apostles as to which of them would be greatest when Jesus ascended the throne of the worldly kingdom they were looking for.

There were two ideas of greatness which dominated their minds, as they were universal in the ancient world; and it was the aim of much of the teaching of Jesus, as well as of his practical dealings with men and women, to show that they were false, and to reveal the true principle. The existing ideas took two forms, one being that of the impression of material mass, vastness, and power upon the imaginations of men, and the other, the conception of human greatness as associated with such immensity and power.

These ideas had a historical origin, which has recently been traced, in the

circumstances in which the early civilizations of the ancient world took their rise in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. Those early empires, whose ruins are so impressive to us still, were built up out of the new power and wealth provided mainly by large-scale agriculture, by peoples who were emerging from the condition of barbarous tribes. Their imaginations were deeply impressed by material vastness in every way; and this was the conception of greatness which they transmitted to the civilizations they founded, and indeed sent forward with such momentum that it has dominated the thought of the ruling classes in civilized society down to the present day.

The imagination, which is more active at the tribal stage of culture than abstract and ethical thought, was caught by this idea of the material greatness of immensity, distance, the vast hordes of tribesmen, the huge areas over which they flooded conquering, the triumphs of cultivation and engineering, the magnificent buildings of palaces and temples, which the new-found wealth made possible; and this led to the kindred idea of human greatness as associated with mass, vastness, and power.

CLASS DISTINCTION

These conceptions correspond to the class distinction which broke like a geological chasm across all these agricultural civilizations, the cleavage known to us familiarly as that between rich and poor, and which is so established in the social order and in the thought of man that it is difficult to realize that in the tribal system of society it does not exist, and that several thousand years or so ago, when the tribal culture was universal on the earth, the division between the higher and lower orders, the wealthy and the indigent, "the haves" and "the have-nots," had not come into being.

As a consequence, however, of the ease of food-production in those favoured regions in which the ancient civilizations arose, and of the resulting great increases of population and vast accumulations of wealth or capital, there took place that immense separation between the two orders of society, so that there was, on the one side, the ruling, possessing, organizing class, with an apparent right to splendour, luxury, and authority. This included orders of leisured people who had time for thought and culture as well as for enjoyment; and among them were the leaders and directors of religion as well as the patrons of art and philosophy.

On the other side were the labouring classes who did the work of wealth production and the toil of all kinds upon which the power and magnificence of the urban civilization and its rulers were built up.

There was a huge difference in the estimate of the value of these two orders into which, broadly speaking, society was divided. Greatness, significance, worth was lodged in those who were connected with the former class, and consisted in the association of such people with an immensity on a scale impressive to the imagination of the tribal barbarian, with masses of wealth, vast conquered lands, immense personal estates, and power over enormous numbers of common men. These common men and women, on the other hand, who had no other role in that society than that of means to the ends of the great, had no value or significance at all except as labourers, fighters, servants, menials, slaves, and, on occasion, human sacrifices for the ruling classes.

A MIRACLE

The striking fact about the action of Jesus in washing his disciples' feet is that it abolished as by a miracle that geological chasm in human society. Indeed it was so miraculous (in spite of being so supremely natural) that the significance of it was only very partially grasped by the twelve at the time, and has largely eluded the understanding of the Church and failed to influence the practice of Christians in general during all the centuries down to the present day.

I need not stay to illustrate how the barbaric conception of greatness in a man, which consists in power to command the service of others in building up one's own magnificence, means of pleasure, and distance by all sorts of privileges from the rest of men, and above all from the common man, still holds the admiration and governs the aims of multitudes of people; and because it has been up to the present hour supreme in the minds of the ruling classes of the leading nations such as our own, is responsible for most of the ills of our society, including many of the tendencies which have issued in the present war.

(To be concluded.)

PERSONAL PROBLEMS

IT has been my intention for some time to make a few notes on "the ministry of conversation." Now, to bring me to the point, comes Marcella Horman's clear statement of its difficulties.

These difficulties most of us have experienced—but chiefly, perhaps, with relations or those among whom we are constantly thrown and who are tempted to regard us as Thoreau's "hen with one chicken and that a duckling." In other words, "people of but one idea."

Two things with such may be helpful; first to remember that they are probably highly conscious of our pacifism to their discomfort. Few words are therefore all that may be necessary at any time unless they invite discussion. Secondly, what we say should be either freshly expressed in new images or contexts, or reveal a new angle of thought.

More important, however, with those who have put up a barrier (even if only subconsciously) against us, is to prove that we are really interested in everything to do with life—not exclusively with its pacifist expression. As a maker of stories for children it has been essential to talk with "all sorts and conditions of men" in order to enrich my knowledge of their outlook on life or of their crafts. This has helped me, no doubt, in sharing my own outlook with others.

VARIETY OF EXPRESSION

As to what should be our "methods of approach," the answer seems to be that they should be varied and apt to the hearer and in the main dependent upon the substance of our remarks. An irrefutable truth does not depend on variety in expression, but people's appreciation of it largely does.

For my part I have frequently found useful such ejaculations in the presence of strangers as: "Jesus is always right; you cannot gather grapes from thistles." Neither can we gather peace from war, or: "Such things as bombs and poison gas should never be made; yet all Christendom, before Hitler was ever heard of, was making these things."

WHAT "EVERYBODY" KNOWS

If the responses have been good enough, I have continued by pointing out that if a small boy approached his schoolmaster with the observation, "Please, sir, you cannot gather grapes from thistles," he would be told to sit down and not talk nonsense, for everybody knows that. Yet Jesus knew it was one of the last things we should learn and understand.

Or, to the "before Hitler was heard of" comment, it has often been useful to add my own impression of Hitler as just the big bad boy of Europe looking into the toy cupboards of his neighbours (in which bombs, bayonets, and the like were all to be found) and saying three things: "I will have a bigger toy cupboard, and bigger toys, and I will use them." The description of a poison gas factory in America by Brailsford, read some years back, comes in useful here, and also the fact that it was an Englishman who invented the tank, proving to the hilt that Hitler did not invent this "bag of tricks" derived, in my judgment, directly from Hell!

TACTFUL ADDITIONS

But elaborations are not always needed or wise. One thing I almost invariably feel it right to say, however, when stating that I take the pacifist position (whatever my own failures spiritually or psychologically in pacifism may be) is to add: "but I know that if a man goes to fight in any war believing it to be right, God will honour him."

Then—if the opportunity seems fitting—I describe my husband during the last war, just released from prison as a CO, and his soldier brother, who had been fighting for four years, on their knees together in the village church of their youth, in perfect friendship, each knowing the other had followed the highest he could see.

ROSA HOBHOUSE

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Anarchism and Democracy

I HAVE been greatly interested in F. A. Lea's article on "Anarchism and Democracy." This problem of the relation of the individual to the State is one more or less (and for the absolutist always more) vital to every pacifist; and Mr. Lea discusses it so competently that I'm sorry to have to disagree with most of his conclusions.

I cannot accept either the Tolstoyan definition of Government, the doctrine of renouncing the State, or Mr. Lea's statement that "if you accept the injunction, 'Resist not evil,' as an absolute" (i.e., I presume, if you are an absolute pacifist), "there is no course open to you but the course of Tolstoy"; nor can I agree that if democracy denies our democratic rights we are therefore forced to become anarchists.

To the definition of Government I can only say, "It need not be so." It is true that Government may be, and too often is, violence, regulated or unregulated. But that is not in the nature of Government; it is rather in the sin of men. And for the Christian there is an answer to and remedy for sin.

The second point (that the absolutist is necessarily an anarchist) is more difficult. Mr. Lea says: "The man who disobeys the law constitutes no part of a democratic Opposition—the Opposition obeys even while it protests." By this it appears that a democrat may be turned into an anarchist by a sufficiently ruthless non-democratic Government, which declares it criminal to believe in democracy or preach it; e.g., a democrat in a totalitarian State is of necessity an anarchist. But isn't this splitting hairs?

The central difficulty is surely this: that a man who believes in the rightness of majority rule may be compelled, for conscience sake, to disagree with some particular majority

decision, and possibly to break a law made by the will of the majority. Does that make him an anarchist? I think not; no more than breaking the laws of God necessarily makes him an atheist, though in that respect he may behave like one. (I don't identify the cases; I merely draw an analogy.) For he believes in the right of the majority to make the law—and, if the majority wish it, to inflict penalties for his refusal to comply with it; while the anarchist denies that right.

You will observe that I disagree also with Mr. Lea's statement that "absolute Christianity" or "the Christianity of Christ himself" is incompatible with any existing society. It may be incompatible with the acts of a society; the individual Christian's reply is to refuse and denounce these acts, and suffer what Wesley called "the reproach of the Cross." To become an anarchist, to cut oneself off from the society which needs the redemption of Christ is not Christian; it is a surrender to the reasoning of the tribunal member who says that the logic of pacifism will make it necessary for pacifists to commit suicide.

WILLIAM B. DAVEY.

5 Oakwood Street,
Sunderland.

While agreeing with the substance of Mr. Lea's second article on "Anarchism and Democracy," I cannot quite understand why he claims that the CO "has no democratic right" to unconditional exemption. Surely under the existing law he has as much right to unconditional exemption as conditional, though many of the tribunals seem to deny it.

HUGH P. FAUSSET

Widdington, Newport, Essex.

GROUP NOTES

The Sensitive Mind

By JOHN BARCLAY

WALKING home from school one day at the age of 10 I had the misfortune to see a dog run over. It happened unexpectedly and made me physically sick. For years afterwards I trembled to see dogs run into the road.

Most of us have had similar experiences and we have had to build protective walls round the injured parts. One of the most tragic effects of the present war is the gradual hardening of the human mind against suffering. Day after day we either see or are told of grim acts of murder in our own neighbourhood or of disasters at sea or in the air, which, had they happened a few years back, would have shocked us beyond measure. My experiences during the last war proved to me how damaging to the senses can be the effect of witnessing continual suffering. Some who began their army careers as quiet, rather shy boys often developed into coarse young men and became overbearing tyrants to those under their command. A sensitive and therefore a suffering mind is, however, essential.

We who today call ourselves peace makers have a grave responsibility. Somehow or other we have to prevail upon our fellow citizens to discontinue the slaughter and to build a new world. Only those whose minds are keenly sensitive and whose imaginations are vivid can hope to grapple with the disillusioned, cynical, and perhaps brutalized humanity which will be the result of the present hopeless conflict.

Toward this struggle our groups are looking and preparing. A general awareness is manifesting itself everywhere. We know it is to be a revolutionary upheaval, and we are anxious that it shall be non-violent.

Suffering is necessary; that is perhaps why some of our best groups are led by men and women who have themselves experienced a revolutionary upheaval in their own lives. The Peace Pledge Union is fortunate in the

quality of its membership—where they lead others will follow.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Birmingham. During bitterly cold weather—and with a heavy fall of snow thrown in—I spent last week-end among the Birmingham groups. Altogether, between Friday night and Sunday night, I visited six groups and the Dick Sheppard Centre. The meetings on the whole were well attended—and in some cases astonishingly so considering the appalling weather conditions.

Edgbaston. The local group meets at the new Gillott Road Hostel. The hostel is now running well under the wardenship of Sydney Conbeer. The nucleus of the community is made up of two married couples. There are vacancies for five young COs, and the charges are according to need—from nothing up to 25s. per week. Furnishing is not complete; the following items are badly needed: Kitchen chairs, small tables, wardrobes, coat-hangers, cupboards, armchairs, rugs, carpets, linoleum, cushions, shelves, curtains, clocks, and one large teapot! Please send or write to Sydney G. Conbeer, 266 Gillott Road, Birmingham, 16.

Oldbury. Meeting at the Warley Institute, this group maintains its reputation for real live leadership. The value of having "old-timers" from the last war is always in evidence. I am hoping to go again in the spring.

Hall Green. Since the departure of Ken Thomason for other worlds to conquer this group has been feeling bereft. However, after a talk round a very chilly stove, we warmed up the engines and once more Hall Green will be pulling its weight.

Sandwell. In spite of deep snow quite a number of keen members turned up to meet me on Sunday morning. Mrs. Lennard lent the room and thawed us out to some purpose. No need to worry about this group. It is "full steam ahead."

Northfield. Here again is a group centred round a community. The room was packed to suffocation. The group is active and well organized and has plenty of interests. Of all the meetings I attended over the weekend this one gave me the most satisfaction. (Perhaps because I knew it was the last of six—and perhaps not).

Space forbids mention of The Grange Centre at Wythall—I will mention them next time. Loughborough group is still active and holds meetings once a fortnight on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in Victoria Street schoolroom (behind the Unitarian Church).

Lincoln. The groups in Lincoln have been unfortunate lately in losing some of their most active and most valuable members, largely due to the decisions of tribunals; but on January 11, an enjoyable new year's party was held in the WEA Common Room, in Danesgate, thanks to Mabel Toomer, Norman Ayres and John Willmot.

Women's Section

NATIONAL V. WORLD IMPORTANCE

WE are becoming accustomed to humbly standing aside from the telephone, telegraph, and other public services while business "of national importance only" can be accepted. And during interminable waiting we naturally ponder on the distinction between things of "national importance" and of world importance.

Socialists tend to become self-disciplined (in thought at least) to distinguish between claims of public importance and personal inclination. But the public weal for which socialists are prepared to make personal sacrifices is not the same as national importance.

The plays which the BBC purveys, as part of the MOI "Empire conscious" propaganda, are teaching the public to regard places like Minorca as instruments of military power for which rival empires gloriously contend. While listening recently to one of these, "The Great Commoner," I could not but reflect that although it was a matter of such passionate importance to Pitt whether Minorca was conquered by the French or the English (and leaving aside altogether the question of what is of importance to the Minorcans) the importance to the world of the outcome was negligible.

ORDEAL BY FIRE

The subordination of a citizen's accustomed claim on public services in favour of affairs of national importance is part of winning the war, and "it" is part of that which the Government propagandists tell us proudly "Londoners can take". Londoners no more know why they should "take it" than did the prisoners, who were (in days of dark superstition) subjected to ordeal by fire. The contending nations are trying to demonstrate which is in the right by putting the limbs of their citizens—yes, even the limbs of their children—in the fire. No-one would submit to this arbitrament in the courts today, knowing full well that the limbs of both sides would be scorched. We pacifists know that, whatever the verdict may be, all the belligerents will be maimed.

Vera Brittain, in a recent Letter to Peace Lovers, rightly points out that pacifists, in spite of this disillusioning knowledge, have had to "take it" with the rest. The consequences of active efforts to bring people to see the futility of "taking it" will draw upon us a "Blitz" of another character. Can pacifists take that?

"TO WHAT END?"

The people of our devastated cities and villages are coming out of their numbed condition, and dogged endurance is giving place to daring inquiry: "To what end?" Are we pacifists going to leave this query to be answered only by patriots, or to simmer into unconstructive discontent? We can, if we will, make this questioning ring in the ears of our rulers; we can—if our message is simple and definite enough.

Negotiation is a word of too technical a character. Two combatants crazed with blows will not stop to reason together; someone must come between them. Lord Ponsonby and other distinguished speakers have expressed longing for the rise of a mediator. We need not be content merely to hope for this; we can search the world for one. While there are still neutrals, let us send emissaries among them to find an impartial mediator; not a politician, but someone of the standing of Nansen, or Romain Rolland—"above the battle".

DOROTHY E. EVANS

Nearly £12 millions a day was spent on the war during the first week and a half of this year, the total expenditure on the supply services being £130,981,000. Ordinary expenditure in the same period totalled £142,466,315. The revenue of £83,990,439 left a deficit of £53,475,876.

NOTICE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

A County Agricultural Committee is prepared to consider the formation of a scheme for Conscientious Objectors registered conditionally upon taking up work in Agriculture to train in hedging and ditching. A Hostel is being provided to house about fifty.

Please apply—G. E. Gregg, Avoncroft, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Wores., for full particulars.

BASELESS ATROCITY PROPAGANDA

AS the war drags on interminably, as food-stocks sink and prices rise, as the general dislocation of civilized life grows greater, so must the daily dose of war propaganda be increased in venom. What was good enough when Britain was assured of an easy victory does not suffice now that a long and doubtful struggle lies ahead. The temptation to come to terms with the adversary must be quelled and the natural antidote is artificial hatred. So our popular newspapers are packed with atrocity propaganda.

A typical example is afforded by the Sunday Express of January 5, wherein Mr. John Gordon does his best to make his readers' flesh creep at the prospect of becoming "a German slave," as the aftermath of peace with Hitler. He takes for his text the following words attributed to Walter Darré, German Minister for Agriculture:—

After the war, in the territories gained, all soil and industrial property of inhabitants of non-German origin will be confiscated without exception and distributed primarily among the worthy members of the party and soldiers accorded honours for bravery. Thus a new aristocracy of German masters will be created. This aristocracy will have slaves assigned to it, these slaves to be their property and to consist of landless non-German nationals. Please do not accept the word "slaves" as a parable or as a rhetorical term; we actually have in mind a modern form of medieval slavery which we must and will introduce.

Now the average patron of the Beaverbrook press cannot reasonably be expected to investigate personally the origin of such a quotation from a foreign (and hostile) statesman. He naturally assumes that such is the job of the editorial staff and he credits them with sufficient honesty not to mislead him wilfully by faked evidence.

So he accepts the foregoing as a genuine extract from an authenticated speech by Herr Darré. But what precisely is its origin? No-one knows!

It first appeared in the British press as a contribution from a "neutral" (and anonymous) "journalist," who alleged that the speech was delivered under conditions of profound secrecy to a carefully selected Nazi audience and that he obtained his information from "a source which he was not at liberty to disclose"! In short, nothing whatever is known concerning where, when, and to whom these words were spoken!

E. W. P. VEALE

"Release Nehru and Azad and all the political prisoners" will be the slogan of the India League's Independence Day meeting to be held in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1, on Sunday (January 26) at 2.30 p.m. Reginald Sorensen MP will be in the chair and the speakers will be Rebecca Sieff, Michael Foot, Professor H. Levy, J. F. Horrabin, D. N. Pritt MP, Ted Bramley and V. K. Krishna Menon.

Jack the Giant-Killer

tee that he will see them safely through this one. But it is, in reality, nothing of the kind; it is a guarantee of the very opposite. And we say peremptorily that the British Prime Minister who, after serving in the War Cabinet during the last war, can say that his immediate duties and responsibilities prevent him from giving thought to the world after the war can do no other than lead the country to disaster. Conceivably, he may lead her, or what is left of her, to "victory"; but the "victory" itself will be only a more condign disaster.

Winning this war—or averting military defeat—is a subsidiary occupation to-day. It is possible that Mr. Churchill is the best man for the departmental job. But he needs to be under the control of a statesman who will think, and think, and think again, of the world after the war. Against Mr. Churchill as a commander-in-chief we have nothing to say; against Mr. Churchill as the controller of the political destiny of this nation at the most crucial moment in her history—everything.

As a statesman, Mr. Churchill's record is simply terrifying. At the end of the last war, he could do nothing better than begin a new one—against Russia! When a new and

(Continued from page 1)

colossal phenomenon emerges from the womb of history, he behaves like Bill in the backstreet. "Ere comes a stranger. 'Eave 'arf a brick at 'im." For Mr. Churchill, Hitler is simply "that bad man." How comforting! How like the story-books! Jack the Giant-killer, all over again.

That is, alas, how we like it. When you are at war, have a war-minded man for the job. So it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. In this sense, Mr. Churchill is an eternal principle: at least co-eternal with war itself. But unfortunately this war is not a war. Or at least that it is a war is much the least important thing about it. That is the incredible, unbelievable fact. This war is essentially the last despairing suicidal effort of a whole civilization to prevent itself from being turned into a new international community. In that effort of regression Mr. Churchill is eminently fitted to play a leading role. The idea of the necessity of a new international community is quite alien to him. Where indeed would be the room for Jack the Giant-killer within it? How should a Churchill co-operate in creating a world where Churchills are no more?

So Mr. Churchill fulfils his part—the foil to Hitler. Hitler has the idea of community—and perverts it into community by conquest. Mr. Churchill provides him with something to conquer. And until Mr. Churchill is subordinated to some statesman who sees the necessity of community by peace and community for peace, who boldly takes the historical initiative from Hitler, instead of following him with a mere military reaction, the grim game of universal ruin and degradation will play on. "It's a grand life!"—for a ghoul.

BOYCOTT OF C.O.s

Strong Criticism by Tribunal Chairman

ONE who has most consistently expressed publicly the greatest concern at the almost systematic boycotting of conscientious objectors by employers has been the chairman of the North Wales Tribunal, Judge Sir Thomas Artemus-Jones.

He spoke again on the subject, at some length, when the tribunal met at Wrexham on January 15. According to the Manchester Guardian of the following day, he said that:

A number of cases had been remitted to them by the Ministry of Labour because the men concerned, who were willing to give their whole time to hospital work, had not been able to find such work, in some cases because there was a prejudice against conscientious objectors.

It was only fair to those young men that it should be made quite clear that they were not only willing but really anxious to do the humanitarian work they were ordered to do by the tribunal. Unfortunately at present there appeared to be no organization in existence to bring humanitarian workers from outside bombed areas into touch with those towns.

This prejudice against pacifism was tending to bring about an unfortunate state of things. The tribunal had a thankless and difficult task in applying the Act, and the Labour Ministry had a still more difficult task in administering it. The difficulty of the Labour Ministry was made much more formidable by this rather thoughtless practice of boycotting or ostracizing citizens for holding pacifist views.

The duty of the law-abiding citizen if he objected to an Act of Parliament was not to take the law into his own hands but to make a constitutional demand for its repeal. Boycotting was a double-edged weapon, and if employers now used it, employees might be tempted to follow the example at the end of the war in any industrial disputes that might arise.

Some of the young men before the tribunal were in touch with the Friends' Ambulance Unit, and the cases would be adjourned for a month to see if their services could be accepted and whether other objectors could secure employment in the bombed areas. One of the objectors, Alfred Edward Jones, of Llangollen, said he had written without success to no fewer than 25 hospitals.

One of the objectors, Alfred Edward Jones, of Llangollen, said he had written without success to no fewer than 25 hospitals.

NEW OR REVISED ADVISORY BUREAUX

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Gravesend.—Mrs. Hayward, 31 Pier Road, Northfleet, Kent.

Highbury.—Will Hayden, 59 Elwood Street, Highbury, N.5.

It is remarkable that Jack Common is not more famous. His monthly contributions to The Adelphi are the liveliest, the most penetrating, the most original commentaries on the contemporary situation now being written. Besides Common's "It's Forty-one Today," the January Adelphi contains a notable essay by Miss Maud Petre of "The Individual and the Collective"; "The Theatre of Persons" by Richard Ward; and "The Nemesis of Ineffectual Religion" by Max Plowman. (10d. post free from The Adelphi Centre, Langham, nr Colchester).

Christian Doctrine and Pacifism

The Cross and the Crisis. By Charles E. Raven, D.D. (Fellowship of Reconciliation 2s).

THIS book contains five addresses given by Charles Raven last August to the FoR as their Chairman at Cambridge. They are "attempts to expand (untechnically) the great doctrines of Christian theology," which he defines as "the interpretation of the fact of Christ" and, though he insists that "there is no theology of pacifism," he does allow that theology can and must grow, and must, in response to the challenge of new knowledge and new crises, discover, or rediscover, fresh truths as regards the relations of God and man.

Informal and unsystematic as this book is (e.g., the Trinity is not even mentioned in it), pacifists who are unused to or impatient of the language of Christian prayer or theology may find it difficult to read; but they may well profit by the wise criticism of social and personal morality which is closely woven into the texture of its argument. Thus, among truths most relevant to our present crisis the author stresses particularly

(1) that those primarily responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus were the representatives of the cultured, the governing, and the religious classes—a warning for us today;

(2) that we all of us need to go down into a hell of ignominy and desolation, as the antechamber of a creative penitence, before we can be spiritually mature to sustain worthily both the sorrows and the joys of this life and to teach others so to do.

(3) that the meaning of our lives and of the universe itself is found supremely in the category of personality;

(4) that true friendship (rather than love) is the best way to conceive the ideal of our relation both to God and to man (here I feel the writer is too severe on the mystical approach to God and humanity through a purified emotion);

(5) that men and women united in such true friendship can produce creative results immeasurable for good;

(6) that the building of communities of friends, however small, is the special opportunity and responsibility of pacifists; and

(7) our peculiar message to the war-mad world—that the unarmed, forgiving endurance of the assaults of evil men, inspired by faith in the divine love to all, is the only radical and ultimate way to overcome and reconcile them.

It is in this last all-important field that there is need of a deeper and more extended interpretation of New Testament doctrine than that which Charles Raven supplies. It is just as regards the meaning of the Cross and the right reaction to evil that the still most prevalent and authoritative type of Christian theology and ethics is impossible for the consistent pacifist to accept. I mean that which makes use of the traditional concepts of divine omnipotence and wrath, guilt, propitiation, and sacrificial death, righteous indignation and punishment, compensatory and retributive justice, and personal education.

In this field of thinking, most fruitful for evil and for good in the social life of mankind, Christian pacifists find their allies, by a strange but explicable irony, more among non-Christian materialists and pantheists than among theologians, whether Catholic or Protestant, or philosophic idealists. There is great need for a series of theological explorations, which, taking up the message of a few isolated pioneers, will establish more convincingly than hitherto that the concepts of sin, atonement, justice, and consequence, which emerge from the New Testament rightly interpreted in the light of human solidarity, are full of satisfying meaning without the need of association with "righteous" anger and retribution, human or divine. Perhaps Charles Raven will turn his great gifts of exposition to this field.

STEPHEN HOBHOUSE

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GERALD BAILEY, Secretary of the National Peace Council, is speaking at Friends' Meeting House, The Mall, Hammersmith, on Sunday, January 26, at 2.30 p.m. on "The Conditions of Peace."

PACIFISM is NOT enough; we must remove the roots of war; all socialists living the Mid-Bucks Parliamentary Division are invited to join the Mid-Bucks I.L.P. Particulars from R. Everett, Corner Cottage, Jordans, Bucks.

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